

arrant hypocrites, mere selfish schemers. It would be guileless, indeed, to look for high principle in most of the chief actors in this memorable crisis of Scottish history. Argyll, Morton, Huntly, Maitland, were probably accessory to the plot to get rid of Darnley, though they may not have had a hand in the actual device, and their patriotism after the murder was actuated by jealousy of Bothwell, as well as by the fear that, in pursuance of his ambition, he would not hesitate to murder the son as he had murdered the father. If Mary would have renounced the murderer, a large party would have restored her to liberty and power. This she would not do, even to save her life, and her fealty to the masterful ruffian whom she owned as husband to the last, was incompatible with the safety of the prince and the realm. Her persistence in her infatuation rendered her restoration absolutely out of the question. The people, at least, in their revolt from a ruler whom they believed guilty of scandalously criminal conduct, acted no dubious part. "Rascal multitude" they might be, but on this occasion they appear as the champions of unalloyed sentiments of disgust and indignation, and they at any rate are not chargeable with hypocrisy in their denunciation of lust and murder in high places. "The Quene," wrote Throckmorton to Elizabeth, "is in verye greate peryll of her lyffe by reason that the people assembled at this conventyon doe mynde vehementlye the destructyon of hir. It is a publyke speache amongst all the people and amongst all estates, saving the counsellors, that theyre Quene hathe no more lybertye nor pryviledge to comyt murder and adulterye than anye other pryvat person, neyther by God's lawe, nor by the lawes of the realme." John Knox and his fellow-preachers improved the occasion to thunder from the pulpit the judgment of God against her as a murderess and an adulteress, and their influence on the popular mind was supreme. Mary's infatuated conduct evoked the expression of the responsibility of the prince to the people. In the Articles presented to the Parliament in December 1567, for instance, the relation between prince and subject is explicitly declared to be of the nature of a contract, and the obligation of this contract is mutual. In the Act of Parliament based thereon the king is held bound by his coronation oath to